

582 Since the children of two brothers or two sisters cannot
601 marry each other, they are not *hura* and *naena* but call each other "brothers" and "sisters," using the terms for elder or younger brother or sister according to their age¹.

621 (Every Vedda so readily helps all the other members of his
224 community and shares any game he may kill or honey he may
606 take in so liberal a manner that at first it was difficult to determine who were the individuals who had a special claim on others of the group. Certainly at first sight it seemed as if all game were equally divided among the members of the group, but after a little time we perceived that while an unmarried man looked especially after his mother, a married man's father-in-law had at least an equal claim on his son-in-law and in practice often received more attention, since a man generally spent most of his time with his wife's family.) That the relationship between
606 father-in-law and son-in-law is very close was shown in a number of ways, thus, when discussing children and their bringing up with Handuna of Sitala Wanniya, we asked him whether Veddass preferred to have a son or a daughter, the answer was prompt
[842] and decided, "a daughter, for thus a man obtains a son-in-law"; and on another occasion when discussing relationship he stated very decidedly, *amma mama ekei*, mother and mother's brother (i.e. father-in-law) are alike, and pointed out that as a man treats

¹ It may be worth while to say something concerning the alleged intermarriage of brother and sister among the Veddass, since Bailey and Hartshorne believed that such marriages occurred, and the Sarasins considered further investigation advisable. Our conclusions agree so thoroughly with Nevill's that we feel that we need do no more than quote what he has written on this subject. "Much nonsense has been written by persons who ought to have known better, about marriage of Vaeddass with their sisters. Such incest never was allowed, and never could be, while the Vaedda customs lingered. Incest is regarded as worse than murder. So positive is this feeling, that the Tamils have based a legend upon the instant murder of his sister, by a Vaedda to whom she had made undue advances. The mistake arose from crass ignorance of Vaedda usages. The title of cousin with whom marriages ought to be contracted, that is, mother's brother's daughter, or father's sister's daughter, is *naga* or *wangi*. This in Sinhalese is applied to a younger sister. Hence if you ask a Vaedda, 'Do you marry your sisters?' the Sinhalese interpreter is apt to say, 'do you marry your naga?' The reply is (I have often tested it), 'yes—we always did formerly, but now it is not always observed.' You say then, 'What? marry your own sister naga?' and the reply is an angry and insulted denial, the very question appearing a gross insult; and if put by a Sinhalese, the Vaedda would probably not even reply to him, but turn away with a gesture of contempt." *Tapeharian*, Vol. 1, 1886, p. 178.

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his mother so should he treat his *mama*. A man's father and his father's brothers are less important than his *mama* who receive the largest share of all game killed by their actual or potential sons-in-law.

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The love and comradeship existing between father-in-law and son-in-law was often very marked, and sometimes the voice of Handuna of Sitala Wanniya took on a special tone of tenderness when speaking of his *baena*; indeed, the importance of the relationship existing between father-in-law and son-in-law is shown in many ways. Thus not only do they very generally hunt and move about together, but whereas when a girl marries she is often given pots and gourds by her mother, a man receives wedding gifts, which—as is shown in the chapter on land transfer—often consist of tracts of land, not from his father but from his father-in-law, who should be his mother's brother.

Again, although a man presents part of his kill to his father's brothers and mother's sisters, a larger share is given to his actual or potential father-in-law and mother-in-law, and before marriage these may get a specially large share. A man would assist his potential father-in-law and mother-in-law in house building and chena cultivation as a matter of course, but he would only help his other uncles and aunts if asked. When hunting, a son-in-law will usually carry his father-in-law's kill, but he would show the same consideration for his own father and probably for any older man.

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We may perhaps fairly sum up this matter by saying, that whereas before marriage a man paid at least as much regard to his future father-in-law as to his own father (and in theory he should pay more), after marriage his father-in-law becomes more important, and the association between father-in-law and son-in-law becomes far closer and more intimate than that existing between father and son. There are, however, certain matters in which father and son are more closely associated than *mama* and *baena*: a boy's bringing up is essentially a matter to which his father attends, and in which the *mama* takes no great part unless the father dies.) (Again, in theory, sons should take at least as large a part in looking after their aged and infirm fathers as do the latter's sons-in-law.)

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606 All Veddass of a group are so nearly related that, with the exception of the bond of the *masas* and *kasas* relationship, the only duties which clearly fall to any individual on account of his relationship to others are (certain ceremonial avoidances.) These are limited to members of opposite sexes and practically include all the men and women whom an individual of either sex might not marry. There is the most rigid avoidance between mother-in-law and son-in-law, and at Godatalawa we had an opportunity of seeing how sternly this rule is carried out. Dilisini is the oldest woman of the community, the wife of the patriarch or "senior" of the group; she is physically unattractive and apparently long past the menopause, nevertheless her son-in-law Kaira who was standing a few paces off would not assist her to rise from the ground, although she had an acutely inflamed knee which was obviously extremely painful. In fact no man may come into any physical contact with his mother-in-law or even approach her closely. Thus, if a man met his mother-in-law in the jungle he would move aside off the track. He may however speak to her in the presence of others, though if he found her alone in the rock shelter he would not enter it until there were others present. Similarly though a man may eat food prepared by his mother-in-law he would not take it directly from her, it would be passed to him by someone else, most probably by his wife. A man avoids his son's wife in precisely the same way, also his brother's wife, and a woman her sister's husband. It was said that if a man attempted to speak in private to any of these women, she would probably suspect him of endeavouring to make improper advances to her which her kinsmen would resent. A man should also avoid touching the daughters of his mother's sisters and his father's brothers as well as all those girls whom he calls "sisters" if these have attained puberty; he may, however, speak to these relatives. We are not quite clear what is the correct attitude of a man towards his wife's sisters or those of his *masas* whom he does not expect to marry, but we believe that generally speaking any close contact is avoided between adults of opposite sexes, and that (practically no man may come in contact with any woman of about his own age except his wife.) At Unuwatara Babula these rules were so

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rigidly observed that we were told that a man might not assist his sister to rise from the ground if she had fallen down and injured herself. Further, it seemed that he should not see much even of the girl whom he was about to marry until she was handed over to him, though according to our Unuwatura Bubula informants it was not really bad for a man to touch any of his *naena* and he was allowed to do this in an emergency. At Sitala Wanniya it was said that adult *hura* and *naena* should not speak to each other even when it had been arranged that they should marry, and at Omuni we were told that if in the old days a man was seen speaking to an unmarried girl, her outraged relatives would seek to kill him. Children may of course come in contact with their parents to any extent and at any age. 602

Second marriages are, and always have been frequent, a man often marrying a sister of his deceased wife and a woman marrying one of her dead husband's brothers. We believe that such unions were regarded as both a privilege and a duty, though according to Handuna of Sitala Wanniya a man married his dead wife's sister principally because if he married any one else his children would not be looked after so well. If a widow does not marry one of her dead husband's brothers she may return to her parents, though it seemed that if these were no longer living she would generally stay with her late husband's group, whose duty it would then be to look after her and her children. 587

With regard to name avoidance, a man does not speak the name of his mother-in-law and daughter-in-law and they also refrain from speaking his name, relationship terms being used instead. Nor does a man commonly speak of his son-in-law or father-in-law, or his brother's wife or sister's husband, except by the appropriate relationship terms; beyond this we would only point out that, as already mentioned, neither man nor woman commonly speaks of his or her spouse by name, and there is a general tendency to avoid the use of names and where possible indicate an individual by a relationship term. In no case did we notice any hesitation in giving the name of any adult which we sought to obtain in the course of our inquiries. The objection to saying a young child's name and the reason for this is referred to on p. 103. 551 [606] 607